



The Adventure

Lent/Easter 2004

ONLINE



The March 6 Special Convention of the Diocese, held at St. Paul's on the Plains Church in Lubbock, was called to order with prayers and an opening address by Bishop Ohl. Bishop Ohl asked the Convention to keep in mind that Convention is the Body of Christ gathered to do the work of Christ in the world, and he instructed Convention members to look for the face of Christ in one with whom they might disagree. Following courteous and thoughtful debate, the Convention adopted two resolutions

proposed by the Budget Committee of Executive Council.

Convention closed with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist followed by a box lunch. Thanks to St. Paul's for gracious hospitality and especially to Carl and Penny Tillerson, Interim Rector Harry Allen, Sr. Warden Jim Brown, the altar guild and organist Byron Gonzalez.

The following pages of *The Adventure* contain the materials presented to the delegates to the Special Convention including: Bishop

Ohl's letter to Convention which introduces the business of Convention and the parameters adopted by the Budget Committee, the two adopted resolutions, and information on the ministries receiving redirected funds. These materials along with detailed information on Redirected Pledges summarized by church and a Summary of Requests for 2004 Redirected Funds are available on the diocesan web site, www.nwt.org

February 27, 2004,

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

As we prepare for the Special Convention on March 6, 2004, the Budget Committee of the Diocese has been in consultation regarding two resolutions that will come before us. The first resolution concerns the amendment of the diocesan budget adopted at the regular Convention in November 2003. That resolution places the approved amount designated for the Episcopal Church budget into two categories: a.) the amount to be sent to the Episcopal Church Center in New York, and b.) the amount to be held by the Diocese and expended for those areas passed by the Special Convention. The second resolution is the recommendation by the Budget Committee for the expenditure of the redirected funds for a variety of mission and ministry endeavors both within the diocese and in the international sphere.

The Budget Committee decided on some parameters as we began our discussion of the various ministries to be funded. The Executive Council, at our retreat in January, expressed its desire not to fund already budgeted items as that could possibly strain the budgets of future years and since those areas, if funded this year, may come to expect future funding. The Budget Committee agreed that this would not be a good precedent to set. We also agreed that "bricks and mortar" projects should not be funded either within or outside the diocese at this time. In addition, we chose not to fund salaries for any position since it would possibly mean cutting that same funding in future years and necessitate cutting positions. We looked over and prayed over the requests, and present to you our recommendations based upon the guidelines we set. We also agreed that half of the funds should be spent for ministry outside the diocese and half for ministries within the diocesan ministry arena.

Attached to this letter are:

1. A summary spreadsheet of the Redirected-Pledges
2. A summary of Requests Submitted for 2004 Redirected Funds
3. Two resolutions proposed by the Budget Committee
4. A Brief Description of Ministries Recommended to be Funded by Redirected Funds
5. The names of members of the 2004 Budget Committee

Each member of the Budget Committee has a copy of the background material received with requests for funding. Please contact one of the members if you want additional information. Please pray through the work we have before us. Registration begins at 8:30 AM on Saturday March 6th, and the Convention will convene at 10:00 AM. It is my prayer that we will conclude our business by 2:00 PM and close with Holy Eucharist. I look forward to seeing you in a few short days.

In Christ



Wallis Ohl
Bishop of Northwest Texas

Resolution #1

Proposed by the Budget Committee of the Diocese of Northwest Texas

Be it resolved that the annual budget of the Diocese of Northwest Texas adopted on November 9, 2003 be amended as follows:

- a. Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society Support approved at \$229,119 would be reduced to \$156,511
- b. Redirected Apportionment Funds would be raised from \$0 to \$72,608

Background: At the Annual Convention of 2003, it was not possible to determine the total of funds that might be redirected as a result of the approved resolution on redirected funds. That resolution allowed individuals to direct the Diocese to withhold that portion of their pledge to the local congregation that would normally go to the Episcopal Church budget (also called the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society Support, and sometimes called the "national church"). Resolution #1 amends the 2004 diocesan budget to reflect the amounts to be redirected and those to be sent on to the DFMS.

Resolution #2

Proposed by the Budget Committee of the Diocese of Northwest Texas

Be it resolved that the Redirected Apportionment Funds of \$72,608 be expended to the following ministries in the amounts listed:

a. **Outside the Diocese of NW Texas**

Breedlove Dehydrated Foods	\$10,000
The Rev. John Dixon (IERE)	4,000
Marc Nikkel School in Sudan	4,000
AIDS treatment in South Africa	2,652
Doctors without Borders	5,000
Our Little Roses (Honduras)	2,652
La Gran Familia Orphanage (Mexico)	<u>8,000</u>
Total	\$36,304

b. **Within the Diocese of NW Texas**

Jubilee Ministry Centers	6,000
New Direction Ministry (Midland)	2,304
Seed money for:	
Santa Maria, Midland	5,000
St. Cyprian's, Amarillo	5,000
Literacy Training in the Diocese	4,000
HIV-AIDS Patient Support	4,000
Food Banks in the Diocese	<u>10,000</u>
Total	\$36,304

Brief Description of Ministries to be funded by Redirected Funds

OUTSIDE THE DIOCESE

Breedlove Dehydrated Foods-A non-profit dehydration and packaging operation dedicated to providing nutritious wholesome vegetable products to hunger and famine relief projects in the US and around the world. The products are distributed through various charitable organizations, providing a staple diet at a minimum cost. Recent relief operations have been conducted in Iran following the earthquakes, Nicaragua, Malawi, and a number of ongoing projects around the world.

The Rev. John Dixon-A SAMS (South American Missionary Society) missionary working with immigrants in our companion diocese in Spain (Iglesia Episcopal Reformada Espanol), specifically in Mostoles, a working class neighborhood of Madrid. The funds will assist with housing for six immigrants, two from Nigeria, one from Rumania, one from Bolivia, one from Ecuador, and one from Cameroon. Low paying jobs, when they can be found, are insufficient to provide housing and food.

Marc Nikkei School in Sudan-Marc Nikkei was an Episcopal Missionary in Sudan who died from cancer in 1998. The school will be headed by Bartholomayo Bol Deng, one of the "lost boys" whose families had been murdered in Sudan and who walked to Kenya to escape the civil war in Sudan. He has studied at the American University in Nairobi Kenya. The Anglican Church in Sudan has come under terrible persecution in recent years, and this school will help rebuild the infrastructure in one of the most devastated areas of the world.

AIDS Treatment in South Africa-AIDS is one of the most devastating pandemics the world has seen since the plague of the 14th century. It is spreading across Africa with unbelievable rapidity and horror. These funds will be directed to appropriate organizations in South Africa through Anglican bishops on site.

Doctors Without Borders-An organization of medical personnel who provide essential medical care and treatment in the most primitive locations around the world. An ecumenical organization, Doctors Without Borders recruits and directs medical missions throughout the world.

Our Little Roses-An orphanage and school for girls in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, founded by Diana Frade, the wife of the former Bishop of Honduras, Leo Frade. Nuestras Pequeno Rosas serves approximately 40-50 girls with housing, food, uniforms, and schooling.

La Gran Familia Orphanage, Cuauhtemoc, Mexico-An orphanage founded by Father Greg Spinks, a priest supported by the Border Consultation, which serves about 25 boys in the poorest section of Cuauhtemoc. This grant will help provide housing for girls as well.

Brief Description of Ministries to be funded by Redirected Funds

WITHIN THE DIOCESE

Jubilee Ministry Centers-Just People is our current Jubilee Center which is located in Abilene and serves as an educational center for training unemployed and underemployed individuals. English language training and education touches many more than just the individual; whole families are impacted. This grant would fund Just People for \$2,000 and each of two future Jubilee Centers, yet to be designated, with \$2,000 each.

New Directions Ministry-An ecumenical ministry supported by the Midland Ministerial Alliance whose primary purpose is to assist ex-inmates who have demonstrated in prison a heart for God and a desire to become productive citizens. The program is designed to address high recidivism rate of men released from prison by providing a "home-like" environment for nine months to one year. While living in the center the men are taught necessary life skills and job training required to obtain employment and live productive lives.

Seed Money for Santa Maria and St. Cyprian's congregations-\$5,000 each is to be designated to provide basic essentials for congregational life development, such as Prayer Books, Altar supplies, basic office supplies, etc., as necessary to the start-up and continued functioning of a new congregation. The money is not to be used for salaries or "bricks and mortar."

The next three ministry expenditures are to be divided equally among the four deaneries for use locally within each deanery.

Literacy Training within the Diocese-The costs per student for literacy training-primarily books and supplies-is about \$70.00 per person. Grants may be made to established literacy training programs or provided as seed money for a congregation to start a new literacy program as decided by the deanery. Benefits include not only the individual served but in many cases multi-generational families as well.

HIV-AIDS Patient Support-Programs within each deanery may be funded as chosen or the funds may be seed money to begin new programs to assist ministry to "the modern lepers" as these patients have been so aptly called.

Food Banks in the Diocese-Each deanery may choose to distribute funds to established food banks that are either community based or congregationally based as they choose. Or the funds may be seed money to begin a new program in a deanery.

San Salvador

by the Rev. Josie Rose,
Holy Trinity Church, Midland

For seven days we arose, greeted by red poinsettias as tall as the building, and vibrant blooming hot pink and yellow bougainvilleas covering the chipped, cracking mud fence around the parking lot. A soft, gentle breeze caressed the fresh morning, welcoming us to the beginning of a new day in a strange, but welcoming land. Soft, rounded mountains outlined the far horizon of San Salvador, the city that would be our home away from home for ten days.

"Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion is to take off our shoes, for the place is holy.

Else we find ourselves treading on people's dreams.

More serious still, we may forget that God was there before our arrival." (John V. Taylor)



We arrived at the compound of the Episcopal Church of San Juan Evangelista on a sunny afternoon on January 17, 2004, and were warmly welcomed by the Reverend Juan Serrano and the staff. On Sunday morning we shared Eucharist with about fifty faithful adult communicants and many beautiful children. I was honored for the invitation to celebrate with Fr. Serrano.

After the service, Fr. Serrano gave us a brief history of the church's involvement with the care of the people during the country's revolution. Fr. Serrano, himself a prisoner for 45 days, steadfastly obeyed his call to

bless, break and give bread and wine to the prisoners. He told us that at one point the Red Cross brought about 1,000 men, women and children to their compound at San Juan Evangelista because it was the safest place for them at the time. This same area is presently being used as a guarded parking lot for the office workers who work in the surrounding office buildings. For us, however, that parking lot was hallowed ground, for our Lord himself was surely present to care for his children during such oppressive, life-threatening times.

Amid the sounds of the city coming to life, the aroma of freshly brewed coffee, fried bananas and corn tortillas browning on a griddle, and the friendly, "Buenos dias," exchanged among friends and strangers, we enjoyed our daily delicious breakfasts served al fresco. After breakfast we gathered up our gear and prepared to leave for El Congo, our assigned work site, located approximately 45 miles away from the compound.

Claudio, our driver, calmly and expertly maneuvered us through the frenzied morning traffic and on to the winding highway that meandered



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through the beautiful countryside with its mountains and lush green tropical growth, making our drive a very pleasant one. Our frequent stops at Lake Coatepeque with its breathtaking sunsets at the end of our workdays were most enjoyable. All of these sights helped us to see what the very poor of the country see every day upon awakening. We saw the effects of such impoverished living conditions; the people see the beauty created by a God who will not abandon them.

"The poor will always be among you."

The description of the land is by no means an effort to gloss over the destitute living conditions still experienced by hundreds of families. We drove by places referred to as "Tin Cities." These are areas where there is no electricity or running water. People live under sheets of tin, which offer them slight, if any, protection from rain. But in the summer heat, these tin shacks cannot possibly offer relief from the searing sun. Women and children, of course, suffer the most, for they are usually the ones left at home while the men go out seeking

work of whatever type is available among the unemployed hundreds.

"Love one another. Spread the Gospel – use words if necessary."

The mission of E.R.D. (The Episcopal Relief and Development), through the Episcopal churches in El Salvador, is to help the country to rebuild the houses of those individuals who have been displaced since the

devastating earthquakes of 2001. The houses are being built in small communities of 15 to 25 families. A chapel or central meeting hall or a school (if the town school is located too far from the community) is built on site along with the one-room houses for the families. These small clusters bring more people together and help build community among the people, giving them a sense of belonging and caring for one another.

Our mission, as a team of nine volunteers, was to help clear the land at El Congo in preparation for the construction of fifteen one-room houses. With pick axes, machetes and one rake we began our work. Assessing the need for more tools, we pooled our resources and provided a few more tools. By the end of the week, we met our goal: we cleared the land for the house to be built for the young couple that oversees the site, and we cleared two more areas where the first houses will be built. Our measurable goal was accomplished, but something more profound took place.

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

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When we first gathered at the airport in Mobile, Alabama, on the cold, rainy morning in January, eight individuals knew of each other; one was a total stranger to seven of them. We came with our individual differences, biases, questions, doubts, and beliefs based on years of upbringing in secluded, segregated neighborhoods – all neatly packed in our luggage. But we had one thing in common: We were all Episcopalians called to do mission outreach, and our hearts were beating with a feeling we could not readily explain.

When we arrived in San Salvador waving palm trees, brilliantly colored flowers, and friendly smiles on strangers' faces greeted us, yet our eyes focused on the trash and litter, accumulated, not necessarily over years of deliberate neglect, but over years of oppressed, impoverished conditions of a beloved country torn apart by natural disasters and the spoils of war. Our senses focused on the unpleasant, unsightly conditions of daily living. Perhaps this was so because until now we had only heard of such conditions on daily news programs, and we had dutifully done our share to alleviate these conditions by sending our customary contributions so that someone else could engage in the elimination or at least the reduction of such plight. Experiencing such dire poverty up close and personal as we were now doing daily was truly a first-time experience for some of us.

"Love one another as I have loved you."

While our eyes focused on the outside conditions, which we believed could be eliminated if only the people tried harder, the eyes of our hearts focused on the individuals who were subjected to such conditions. Although our worries were still concentrated on the conditions, our truer concerns slowly concentrated on the individuals. Perhaps without our even realizing it, we were seeing the face of

Christ in the faces of the children, women and men we were encountering daily.

Our hearts beat with the question, "Why are the poor always among us?" And we realized that the poor were not only here in San Salvador, but in our hometowns. Instead of blaming the people for their impoverished conditions, we were now realizing that we shared in the cause of this condition. And the most important question nagged us: "What are we going to do about it?" This was the transformation in all of us. We set out to minister to. Now we understood that ministry is with, not to one another.

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

What difference will E.R.D. and E.R.D. volunteers make? The church family of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mobile, Alabama, is in the process of becoming a companion diocese with the diocese of El Salvador. Their main focus will be on education, helping the Reverend Ramiro Chavez realize his dream to provide scholarships of \$12.00 per student per month so that they can attend good quality Episcopal schools, and providing

schools supplies for their schools.

"For what you have done for the least of these, you have done for me."

What difference can our church and/or our diocese make? We can help with contributions to St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mobile, Alabama to help them with their companion diocese endeavor. We, too, can become a companion diocese and focus on medical assistance, or we can contribute to E. R. D. to help them meet their goals to build more homes to continue to help those left homeless due to disasters. We can make a concentrated effort to alleviate the impoverished conditions of our neighbors in our own communities. In our prayers we can lift up the efforts of those individuals who are engaged in mission outreach and ask that their endeavors be blessed with fruitfulness. In our prayers we can ask that we truly become instruments of God's peace.

Contributions may be sent to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 4051 Old Shell Rd., Mobile, AL 36608. Indicate on your check that your contribution is for their mission outreach in San Salvador.





From the Bishop's Desk

The Special Convention of the Diocese of Northwest Texas met on Saturday March 6th at St. Paul's on the Plains in Lubbock. Our single order of business was to determine how we are to spend the funds redirected from our offering to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (the corporate entity of the Episcopal Church of the United States) as allowed by a resolution from our 45th convention in Amarillo last November. That resolution allows individuals to redirect, by written request, that portion of their pledges which would be sent to the diocesan budget and then apportioned to the DFMS. (A list of the totals of pledges in our congregations and the percentage of each congregation which wished to be redirected may be accessed at the website NWT.org) The Executive Council had recommended that most of the funds, if not all, should be spent for items outside our budget and should not be used to make up for budgetary cuts. When the budget committee met in late February they decided to recommend to convention that 50% of the funds be spent outside the diocese on outreach projects and

50% within the diocesan boundaries for local outreach projects. The list of approved expenditures may be found on page three of this *Adventure*.

What was most gratifying to me was that almost 200 diocesan leaders came together for a day to discuss, debate and approve over \$70,000 for outreach projects. As one member of the diocese said on the floor of convention, "Outreach must be important to us for us to spend our time and energy in this level of discussion." At the Eucharist which closed our Special Convention, I announced that the offering would be spent on outreach outside the diocese; the offering totaled almost \$1800.00!

Too much of our time too often is spent on discussing how we will spend our funds on ourselves. Certainly we have administrative and property needs which must be met; however, too little of our resources go to meet the real needs that exist right outside our own doors. We have too often turned the blind eye to crushing poverty in our neighborhoods and towns, in our diocese, and across the world. Our deacons are charged to challenge us to seek the hungry, the thirsty, the lonely, the prisoner, the sick, and the less than well clothed of this world and do something about those needs.

My prayer is that the energy that was generated in our Special Convention may grow within each of our congregations and mission stations to reach out beyond ourselves with both financial resources and personnel resources. I know that not everyone is called to feed the hungry at a food

bank or soup kitchen. Not everyone is called to work in a thrift house. Not everyone can work with prisoners or their families. Not everyone is comfortable bringing the healing touch of Christ to the sick. Not all can be with the "down and out-ers" of our world. But some of us are, and all of us can, in some manner, help support such ministry. This is nothing less than what Jesus calls us to in that wonderful parable of the Kingdom in Matthew 25: 31-46. He calls us to see Him in everyone we meet and to do our best to care for them as we would care for Him. It is not a suggestion.

It was a great privilege to be with the diocese as we focused outside ourselves. What would happen if that became the norm instead of the exception? How might we change the world around us, locally and globally? Pray about that and about how you and your congregation might reach out even more than you are. Christ leads us to be transformed. But if the transformation ends with us, are we really transformed? How can you—we—see Christ more clearly unless we look beyond ourselves to see Christ in the other?

May the good work that was begun among us on March 6th grow and help us be transformed into Christ's hands and feet and lips and touch for this broken and starving world.

HW Miller



By Leslie Boykin
Diocesan ERD Coordinator

Episcopal Relief and Development is an effective, reliable, and vital ministry of the Episcopal Church in communities around the world. Episcopal Relief and Development provides emergency assistance in times of disaster, rebuilds devastated communities after the immediate crisis is over, and offers long-term solutions to help people sustain safer, healthier, and more productive lives.

Episcopal Relief and Development has a very informative website with updates on the assistance being given, resources our Parishes can use to inform parishioners of the incredible work being done throughout the world, and ways that we can help in these efforts. Please visit the site at www.er-d.org to learn more. The following is a summary of current work being done by ERD.

ERD Provides Emergency Assistance to Haiti After Unrest

Episcopal Relief and Development is providing assistance to Haitians in the aftermath of ongoing violence and unrest. Political protests and demonstrations have killed 51 people, injured dozens, and disrupted life for thousands.

"The recent political unrest in Haiti is almost bringing the country to a halt," said the Rt. Rev. Jean Zache Duracin, Bishop of Haiti. "The latest events create an even more precarious economic situation in many regions where the population had already been affected not too long ago by floods and other natural disasters," stated Bishop Duracin.

On behalf of the Episcopal Church, Episcopal Relief and Development has advanced emergency funds to the Diocese of Haiti so local parishes can provide food, temporary shelter, and medicines to children, women, elderly and other displaced people. "The aid will allow us to respond to the most urgent needs of the worst affected areas."

ERD remains in contact with Burton Joseph, the diocesan Program Officer for Haiti. ERD prays for people in Haiti and will continue monitoring the situation.

To make a contribution to the Haiti Relief Fund or respond immediately after natural disasters and civil unrest around the world, donate online using a credit card at www.er-d.org or call (800) 334-7626, ext. 5129. Gifts can be mailed to: Episcopal Relief and Development, c/o Haiti Relief Fund, PO Box 12043, Newark, NJ 07101.

Transitions

The Rev. Jim Hunkins of Lawton, Oklahoma, is Interim Rector at Emmanuel, San Angelo. Jim was born and reared in Nebraska, graduated from the University of Nebraska, Seabury-Western Seminary, and the University of Missouri. He served churches in Nebraska, Missouri and Oklahoma until his retirement in 2001. We welcome Jim and his wife Carol.

The Rev. Mike Smith, former Associate Rector of Emmanuel, San Angelo and Diocesan Christian Education Committee Chair for many years, is now serving as Rector of Christ the King Church in Tucson, Arizona. God Speed to Mike and his family.

WHY SEEK THE JUBILEE DESIGNATION?

by Dr. Mark Waters
Diocesan Jubilee Officer

There are currently over 600 Jubilee Centers in the United States and in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Honduras, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Spain, and Brazil.

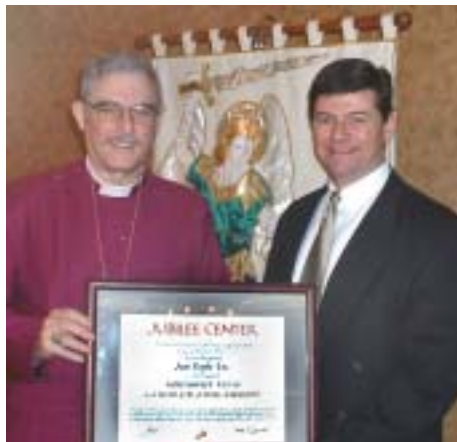
There are four major aspects of Jubilee ministry-Advocacy, Empowerment, Evangelism, and Outreach.

Advocacy addresses root causes of poverty and oppression. Such ministries not only serve people who are in need, but seek to change the systemic sources that keep people oppressed or poor. Advocacy may support children, education, AIDS related issues, health issues, housing, immigration, and the like.

CLUE – Clergy United for Economic Justice – is an example of an ecumenical Jubilee Ministry that advocates for the working poor in Los Angeles. Their mission statement is:

- To fulfill the dream: an end to poverty for workers
- To call upon the leaders and citizens of Los Angeles to affirm a new vision, one that places the universal values of justice and dignity above all else. Based on the spirit of our various faith traditions, we in the religious community believe that widespread poverty surrounded by unprecedented wealth is both tragic and morally unacceptable.
- To embrace our responsibility to eliminate poverty in the midst of plenty
- To stand firmly in the tradition of our greatest moral leaders [From Jesus to Martin Luther King, Jr., from Moses to Gandhi, poverty has been recognized as a scourge on the soul of humanity.]

Empowerment refers to equipping people to help themselves. Proverbial sayings such as “teaching to fish rather than giving a fish” or “a



Bishop Ohl and Mark Waters receiving Jubilee Center designation.

hand up rather than a hand out” express the spirit of empowerment. Empowerment includes education, job training, life-skills development, counseling and similar services.

Just People, Inc. (JPI) in Abilene is an example of a Jubilee Ministry Center whose focus is empowerment. JPI provides academic, vocational, and personal services to people with major barriers to education and employment. Current programs include disadvantaged youth and homeless of all ages. Their ministry is expressed in the following statement:

Just People, Inc. is a faith-based organization dedicated to equipping and empowering disadvantaged youth, the working poor, and the poor who want to work through education, training, employment assistance, support services, and through belief in each client's potential to succeed.

Evangelism is good news. There is a sense in which all ministry is

evangelism in the best sense of the word. To serve another in the name of Christ – in word or deed – is to share the good news of hope, forgiveness, and unconditional love.

Calvary Episcopal Church in Memphis is a Jubilee Center with multiple ministries. In the area of evangelism, they offer an arts ministry, AIDS healing services, interfaith exploration, and a Lenten preaching series.

Outreach is any ministry to people outside the church. In Jubilee terms, outreach refers to such ministries that do not fall in the preceding categories.

The Jubilee Café is an outreach ministry operated by the Canterbury House in Lawrence, Kansas. Since its inception eight years ago, The Jubilee Café has served over 40,000 free meals and employed over 1000 student volunteers. This ministry not only provides food for those in need, it educates college students on issues of poverty and homelessness.

These are just some examples of the services offered by various Jubilee Ministry Centers. Perhaps your parish, ecumenical agency, or agency with Episcopal connections provides similar ministries. If so, you may wish to explore further the possibility of applying for the Jubilee designation. Contact Mark Waters at 325-672-2118 or mwaters@justpeopleabilene.org for more information.

(Information for this article was gleaned from various Jubilee publications and the Jubilee website, <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/Jubilee>.)

The Canon's Comments...

The Rev. Canon J. Michael Ehmer
Canon to the Ordinary

Talking

Have you seen it? Everybody has, you know. Well, if you haven't seen it, then I'm sure you've at least heard about it. Everywhere you turn it's coming up in conversation, both private and public. I'm speaking, of course, about *the* movie of the year—Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*.

I need to make it clear here at the beginning of this article that this is not a critique of the movie. One must have seen the movie in order to critique it (or at least that's the way I feel about it) and I have not seen the film—though, as a friend said to me, I did read the book. But what I have seen with my own two eyes, and heard with my own two ears, and processed with the stuff in between them, is our society's reaction to the movie.

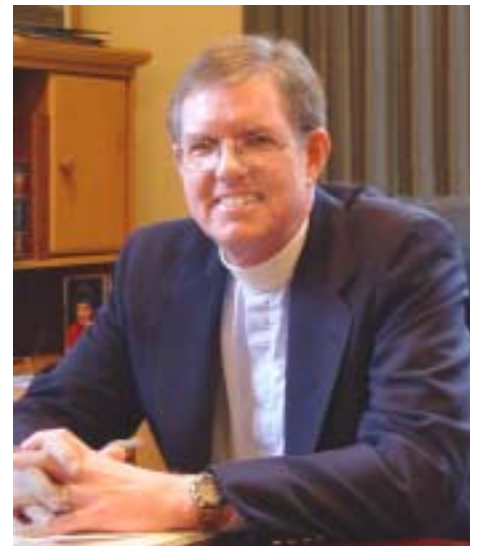
The public, fueled mainly by the media, both religious and secular, has been fascinated by this film. It was a topic of discussion throughout the western world for at least a year before it opened and the crescendo of discussions continually increased, peaking on Ash Wednesday, its opening day.

The usual discussion topics include: Is the movie anti-Semitic—does it paint Jews in a bad light? Is it too violent? Is it biblically accurate? Does it have too much of a Roman Catholic slant in its depiction of Mary? Does it focus too much on the atonement at the expense of the resurrection—too much emphasis on Good Friday and not enough on Easter Sunday?

Again, I can't answer these questions because I have not seen the movie. And to tell you the truth, I'm not sure when or if I will see it. But then again, finding specific answers to the above questions is not really important to me. Besides, I don't believe there is just one correct answer to each of the questions. Each one of us will have to decide for ourselves how to answer them. We each will have our own opinions on how they should be answered (at least once we've seen the film).

Before we can speak to an issue (in this case the movie) we must first have experienced it. Before we can rationally and intellectually enter a discussion on any topic we must first explore it, we must study it, we must learn about it. Now I don't mean to imply that one must be a categorical expert in something before one can speak about it, but, I think you'll agree, the more one knows about a subject the more one can add to the discussion.

Of course, in our world of mass communications there is a great danger of overloading one's self with information, especially incorrect information. I heard just this morning about a school that had banned Styrofoam cups because they had read on the Internet how damaging they are to the air. The website, as it turns out, was a hoax. The school administrators were quite embarrassed. Let the reader beware, not everything one reads or hears is accurate. Sources of information are as important, if not more so, than the



information they deliver.

And there has been no shortage of sources of information surrounding *The Passion of the Christ*. I've seen countless newspaper and magazine articles concerning either the movie itself or some of the hot-button questions the movie has raised. Television stations of all varieties have aired specials on the topics. Talk radio has filled the airwaves with various opinions on the subjects. Readers, viewers and listeners, it seems, have choices galore to learn more about this movie and about religion in general, and that's a good thing. But just because someone speaks about it doesn't mean they know what they're talking about.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, the greatest thing Mel Gibson's latest movie has done for our society is to initiate a new round of religious discussions. It has provoked people who would not normally be talking about these topics to bring them to the forefront. It has brought out lots of opinions about Jesus, the Bible and God. We've heard from experts, self-proclaimed experts, and crackpots. Part of the problem, unfortunately, is that most of us can't tell them apart. But at least we're talking, and that fact is much more important than the actual movie!

2004 Apportionment Contributions As Of March 17, 2004

Congregation	2004 Apportionment	Total Received	Balance Due	Percent Complete
Abilene, Heavenly Rest	120,304.00	20,050.66	100,253.34	16.67%
Abilene, St Mark's	10,263.00	1,719.00	8,544.00	16.75%
Albany, Trinity *	1,110.00	0.00	1,110.00	0.00%
Amarillo, St Andrew's	91,734.00	22,933.50	68,800.50	25.00%
Amarillo, St Peter's	55,801.00	13,950.24	41,850.76	25.00%
Andrews, St. Matthias	1,790.00	0.00	1,790.00	0.00%
Big Spring, St. Mary's	37,325.00	6,220.84	31,104.16	16.67%
Borger, St Peter's	16,380.00	2,730.00	13,650.00	16.67%
Brownfield, Good Shepherd	5,289.00	3,000.00	2,289.00	56.72%
Canyon, St. George's	8,212.00	1,368.66	6,843.34	16.67%
Childress, St. Luke's *	973.00	325.00	648.00	33.40%
Clarendon, St John's	1,620.00	400.00	1,220.00	24.69%
Coleman, St. Mark's	7,131.00	1,426.00	5,705.00	20.00%
Colorado City, All Saints'	3,468.00	867.00	2,601.00	25.00%
Dalhart, St. James'	19,128.00	4,782.00	14,346.00	25.00%
Dumas, St. Paul's	4,069.00	1,020.00	3,049.00	25.07%
Hereford, St. Thomas	9,782.00	0.00	9,782.00	0.00%
Kermit, St. Peter's*	680.00	0.00	680.00	0.00%
Levelland, St. Luke's	3,835.00	640.00	3,195.00	16.69%
Lubbock, St. Christopher's	40,293.00	0.00	40,293.00	0.00%
Lubbock, St. Paul's	71,263.00	17,815.74	53,447.26	25.00%
Lubbock, St. Stephen's	52,431.00	13,105.26	39,325.74	25.00%
Midland, Holy Trinity	183,680.00	30,613.34	153,066.66	16.67%
Midland St. Nicholas	105,808.00	26,451.99	79,356.01	25.00%
Monahans, St. James'	3,867.00	966.00	2,901.00	24.98%
Odessa, St. Barnabas	40,377.00	3,365.00	37,012.00	8.33%
Odessa, St. John's	41,567.00	10,391.76	31,175.24	25.00%
Odessa, San Miguel	1,541.00	0.00	1,541.00	0.00%
Pampa, St. Matthew's	39,564.00	9,891.00	29,673.00	25.00%
Perryton, All Saints'*	1,070.00	384.00	686.00	35.89%
Plainview, St. Mark's	12,158.00	2,026.30	10,131.70	16.67%
Quanah, Trinity	1,074.00	0.00	1,074.00	0.00%
San Angelo, Emmanuel	87,395.00	14,565.84	72,829.16	16.67%
San Angelo, Good Shepherd	49,940.00	0.00	49,940.00	0.00%
Shamrock, St Michael's *	204.00	0.00	204.00	0.00%
Sweetwater, St Stephens	25,761.00	4,293.50	21,467.50	16.67%
Vernon, Grace	3,082.00	0.00	3,082.00	0.00%
Totals	1,159,969.00	215,302.63	944,666.37	18.56%

DOCC TRAINING SCHEDULED

Disciples of Christ in Community (DOCC), a congregation-centered program, has proven to be extremely important in many Episcopal churches. DOCC can be instrumental in the growth of Christian community within a congregation and pivotal with respect to individual spiritual development. Founded by the Rev. John Stone Jenkins in the 1970's, DOCC is administered by the School of Theology Programs Center of the University of the South in Sewanee, TN.

This spring at the Plains Baptist Assembly in Floydada, an intensive training conference will be held beginning on the evening of May 12th and concluding on the evening of May 16th.

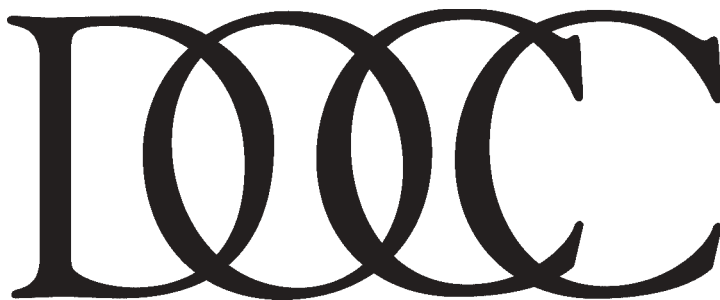
Through a generous donation, this conference is being underwritten by St. Stephen's, Lubbock to offer the requisite leadership preparation for congregations interested in establishing a DOCC program.

The cost for each participant is \$200 and includes lodging, all meals and materials. Scholarship monies are available. If you require private or special accommodations, we will try to make these possible if available.

The conference aims to provide both training for and experience of the essence of the DOCC program,

primarily through a series of presentations by the Rev. Margaret Austin, (former National Director of DOCC and Rector of St. Stephen's, Lubbock) followed by small group discussion.

Interested congregations should plan to send to the conference a team, consisting of the prospective presenter (usually clergy) and a group of lay people to act as facilitators (two for each group of 8-10 participants anticipated).



To register or receive additional information, please contact DOCC Conference Administrator, at St. Stephen's by telephone at 806-792-9167 or by e-mail at carolynlgp@aol.com.

Cursillo – A Crash-course in Christianity

by Jane Barnes
CoChair Crusillo Secretariat

Do you feel like your spirituality needs a booster shot? Are you confident in your faith in God, but you would like more excitement in your daily religious life? Are you ready to experience the Love of Christ through other Christians? Then, perhaps an answer for you is Cursillo.

Officially, Cursillo is a “short course in Christianity”, but I read a description recently of Cursillo as a “crash-course in Christianity.” Since the Cursillo weekend is conducted over a three-day weekend, the crash-course description is quite appropriate. Much is crammed into the three days – prayer, eucharists, talks by clergy and lay people, LOTS of singing, some food, group discussions and craft activities, and more. All of these activities are aimed at providing a candidate with the realization of God’s love and the grace of Jesus Christ in a powerful way.

Here is what Joan Davis, from

St. Christopher’s in Lubbock, had to say about her Cursillo experience: “Cursillo was a week-end full of fun, surprises, joy, laughter, and love. It was an example to me of what Christian community is. This joy, laughter and love have stayed with me in my Christian walk, which I try to share with others”

The next Cursillo weekend in the Diocese of Northwest Texas will be held July 29 – August 1, 2004, at Mercy Retreat Center in Slaton, TX (about 20 miles from Lubbock). The cost for the weekend is \$125. We expect the available spaces will fill up quickly, so we urge you to get your application in soon. Applications are available from your church office, or contact Caroline Holmes, 3310 Stanolind, Midland, TX 79707.

For more information on Cursillo, contact Mel or Jane Barnes, jambbarnes@cox.net or (806) 799-6721.

Province VII Announces the Launch of its New Web Site

The mission of Province VII Online is to make information readily available across our twelve dioceses.

The Hub, which is the province’s quarterly publication, can be viewed and printed from the site. Also, the monthly treasurer’s report, minutes from the provincial council meetings, updated by-laws, and contact information for all council members and network leaders are now online. A calendar of upcoming events and news and information from around the province are updated frequently. In addition, there are links to current articles from the Episcopal News Service.

The Province VII Council hopes that every diocese will take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about and participate in the life and mission of our province.

[www.episcopalchurch.org/
province-seven.](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/province-seven)

St. James Helps Build Library in Africa

St. James Episcopal Church, Monahans, is helping erect a library in Tanzania, East Africa which is one of the few peaceful countries in the continent and among the five poorest nations in the world.

The library is part of a new school being developed 45 miles west of the Indian Ocean in the rain forest district of Kisarawe which is outside of the commercial capital of Dar es Salaam. The Tanzanian government, coming out of socialism into democracy, requested the Church build this school which presently serves 300 students in grades 6 - 12 and will grow to an enrollment of 700 students.

Mr. Vernon Rowe, senior Warden of the St. James congregation, learned of the project from one of the "winter snowbirds" from Michigan who worships with them. The Rev. Robert and Deloris Langseth, in-laws of Jeppie and Faith Wilson of Monahans, are coordinators for the effort in their Northern Great Lakes Lutheran diocese. They have led four "self-help work crews" which have donated over 16,600 hours of sweat equity working shoulder-to-shoulder with fellow Christians in Tanzania.

In order to complete the three story 33 ft. x 100 ft. structure they are presently gathering funds and another crew of workers. A dentist from Wisconsin on the 2001 work crew was so taken with the need that he issued a \$75,000 challenge. The money must be matched and the building completed by July, 2004. The good news is that nine people have already signed up for the crew that leaves on June 12th. Along with the \$275.00 in gifts from folks at St. James, a retired Greyhound bus driver from Michigan

recently contributed \$20,000 toward the challenge. "We surely thank St. James for their gracious gift." stated Rev. Langseth, "At this point we are about \$11,000 short of our goal."

Equal opportunity principles are exercised at this parochial school. Admission is open to all regardless of religious faiths, ethnicity, gender or social/political status. To date, it remains the only registered non-government secondary school in the Kisarawe district. This is the only school library in the entire district of 55,000 people.

The school is a strategic entry point and outreach hub to the district's social development. The school has sustained over the years a good performance record in national test scores. It has always been among the upper 20% of the secondary schools in Tanzania.

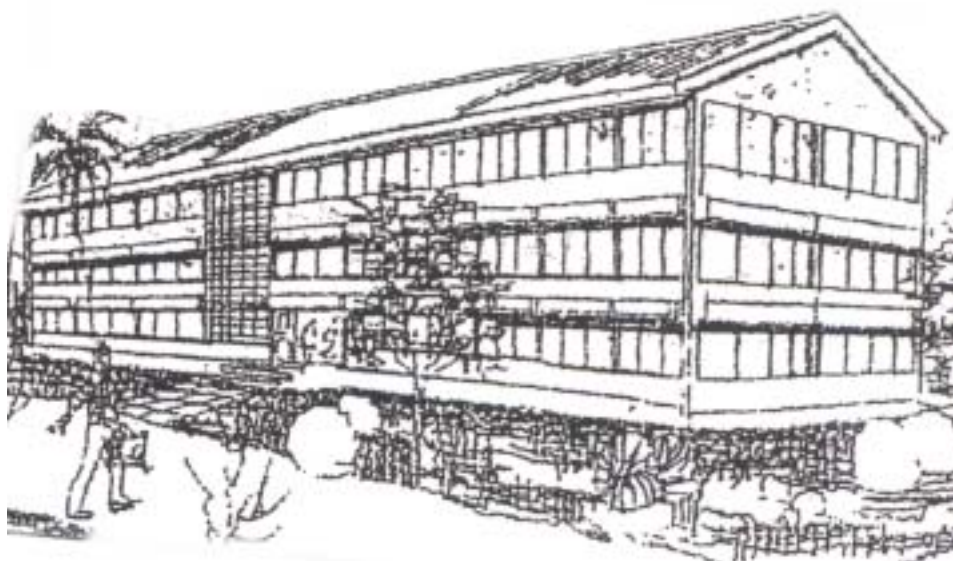
Cognizant of the barriers to girls' education in the cultural context; the school deliberately seeks a fifty percent ratio of female enrollment. MV

and AIDS education are part of the curriculum and the school's instructor also serves as a resource person to the Kisarawe district.

Kofi Annan, U.N. Secretary General, speaking in Milwaukee, Wisconsin two years ago stated, "With minimal investment in basic education, billions of poor people can 'leapfrog' into the world of instant communications and become part of the 21st century's global economy."

On July 10, 2004 the three story structure will be completed and have a grand dedication. The President of Tanzania, Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, is the invited speaker. "It is a delight to know that St. James has had a part in making this happen", stated Warden Rowe. "We are happy that we can invest in relieving the poverty of people and give hope to untold generations longing to leap into the educated world of the 21st century."

For further information contact Mr. Vernon Rowe at (432) 940-3404.



Get Started RIGHT!

New Intensive Hispanic Ministries Course by the Rev. Jaime Case, Director of the Center for Hispanic Ministries

The Center for Hispanic Ministries will offer an Intensive course in Hispanic Ministries for interested persons from June 21 to June 25, 2004 on the beautiful campus of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin Texas.

The course will cover:

- The Latino/Hispanic in the U.S.
- Popular Religious traditions
- The Church Year celebrations
- Pastoral Care
- Christian Education
- Cultural Engagement
- Why Hispanic Episcopal Mission?
- Traditions of Funding
- Values, Authority and Culture
- Using Demographics

The Course is designed for Lay and Ordained preparing for mission to Latinos living in the United States. The course does not require Spanish proficiency. There is no language component or instruction in Spanish. The content of the Course is identical to an elective offered at the

Seminary of the Southwest by the Rev. Jaime Case. It is a 2.0 credit hour equivalent course. Course including housing and food will cost \$600. Space is limited, and a \$100 un-refundable deposit is due by May 1, 2004.

The Center for Hispanic Ministries was founded in 1980 to advocate for and support ministry and evangelism to Hispanics. The Center has been offering courses in Hispanic culture and ministries nearly since its inception. The Rev. Jaime Case offers the same course to students of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin Texas. You can contact the Rev. Jaime Case, the Executive Director at Jaime_case@sbcglobal.net or 512-477-2644.

The Reverend Jaime Case considers himself a TCK (Third Culture Kid), raised by missionary parents from the U.S. in the Philippines then returning for college to Iowa. He is currently the Executive Director of the Center for Hispanic Ministries and Adjunct Faculty at ETSS. Formerly he served as Executive for El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission where he completed \$7.3 million capital project. Jaime also served as Vicar for San Francisco Episcopal Church during the same period. Jaime (hai-meh) loves to study issues of diversity, culture, language and mission.

June 21-25, 2004 at ETSS, Austin, Texas

Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest Summer Continuing Education session set for June 7-11

"Doing Theology As If People Mattered" and "Preaching Hope in a Time of Conflict" are two timely themes of the continuing education program at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest in early June.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Bevans, SVD, will offer the theology session and the Rev. Dr. Roger Paynter will lead the preaching seminar June 7-11 on the seminary campus. Detailed information and a downloadable registration form is available at http://www.etss.edu/continuing_ed.shtml. Contact information for Nance Busbey, program registrar, is nbusbey@etss.edu or 512-472-4133, ext. 322.

Recognizing the central role of

human experience (history, culture and context) in the theologizing process, the Bevans session will offer six distinct ways or "models" of how theology can be done in all facets of ministry, as well as offering a spirituality that stresses the need for ministers to both "let go" and "speak out."

Author of *Models of Contextual Theology*, Bevans is professor of mission and culture at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Bevans edits the international journal, "Mission Studies," and co-edits the *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization* series for Orbis Publishing.

The Paynter session will explore preaching a word of genuine hope to a church caught in the crossfires of

conflict. Courage - not cheery upbeat calls to "just get along" - is needed to address the reality of injustice, despair and exile with a word of biblical hope.

Paynter has taught homiletics and spirituality at the Seminary of the Southwest for the past several years. Senior pastor of the First Baptist Church in Austin, Paynter is president of the Baptist advisory board at Brite Divinity School and a member of the board of directors of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke Divinity School.

Tuition for the continuing education program is \$325 with an additional \$150 for campus room and board. Registration deadline is May 28.

Bishop Ohl Urges Support of Church Seminaries

"Supporting theological education is good stewardship." With these words, Bishop Wallis Ohl encourages rectors and senior wardens of parishes throughout the diocese to include a line item for theological education in the parish budgets.

Once again, General Convention reaffirmed the One Percent Plan, said Bishop Ohl. First adopted in 1982, this plan asks each parish to contribute annually one percent of its net disposable income to one or more of the eleven accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church. "It's important to

realize our church provides no financial support to our seminaries like many other denominations do," said Bishop Ohl.

"Contributions from parishes uphold the importance of the partnership between the seminaries and the people and congregations who value and support the work of the seminaries," said Bishop Ohl. Right now the diocese has three seminarians studying at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, Virginia Theological Seminary, and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, and clergy in the

diocese were educated in virtually one of every Episcopal seminary. All of these receive contributions under the One Percent Plan.

"I have been a rector and I well understand the demands on a parish budget," added Bishop Ohl. "Supporting theological education is so important because it touches directly on the future of our church. Every single parish in this diocese should understand the importance of the One Percent Plan. Every single parish should be supporting a seminary."

Camp Quarterman 2004

"On The Road Again"

Primary Camp	(Completed Grades 2-4)	June 20-26
Junior High Camp	(Completed Grades 5-7)	June 27-July 3
Senior High Camp	(Completed Grades 8-12)	July 13-19

Applications are available at the Episcopal Church in your area, at the Hulse Center in Lubbock, or at www.bqcc.org